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ABSTRACT

This document contains 12 case studies to be used for reference with the 9 modules in this resource pack designed to help trainers and postsecondary and continuing education staff meet the needs of special needs students in Great Britain. Each case study is about a single special needs learner and contains general, educational, social, and vocational information about him or her. (CML)

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LEARNING SUPPORT

RESOURCES SECTION

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INTRODUCTION

These young people are featured at various points in the pack, generally where they are used as examples in the exercises. You will learn a little more about them each time they appear.

Furthermore, you can use examples of your own students/trainees alongside those provided; in which case you will need to build up a similar profile of information as you go.

The case-studies are based on real students and trainees and are not intended to represent any particular type of special need. They should, instead, illustrate the complex range of interrelating factors which contribute to the special needs of each individual.

It is anticipated that you will select a range of young people to use from those provided, rather than working through the activities with every character.

It is important to stress that the starting point for meeting special education/training needs is recognising individual needs.

The information provided gives a picture of each individual, drawn from a number of sources. It is presented in a way in which those sources (for example, careers, health and education agencies) may provide information. It may be subjective and include a variety of assumptions and value judgements and therefore its accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

The format for the presentation of the information *should not* be assumed to be a good way of assembling information about learners nor is it intended to provide a model for use elsewhere. It will be helpful if facilitators spend some time discussing *critically* the way the information has been presented.

CASE-STUDIES

CASE-STUDY: MARIA

This information gives a picture of an individual, drawn from a number of sources. It is presented in a way in which those sources (for example, careers, health and education agencies) may provide information. It *does not* represent the best way of presenting information about learners and *should not* be treated as a useful model. It may be subjective and include a variety of assumptions and value judgements so its accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 16

Schools attended: local comprehensive school. Little information is available on her school career but she appears to have been fairly able both academically and in terms of her practical skills.

Physical development: she is of average stature but rather overweight. Her co-ordination is good.

Verbal communication: Maria can communicate effectively, but on meeting new people she can refuse to speak and gives strong messages, via her body language and facial expressions, that she does not wish to communicate.

Self care: Maria's appearance is most striking as she needs to improve her personal hygiene drastically. This is one of the areas of greatest need.

Public transport: independent.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: she does, in fact, have well developed literacy skills and is quite competent in this area. Unfortunately, this is not always obvious from her responses.

Numeracy: as with her literacy skills, she is quite competent, although she may not appear to be so.

Practical subjects: Maria is adept in practical areas and has a special interest in home-making activities.

Despite her ability she did not obtain any academic qualifications at school.

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: Maria's home environment is poor. Several indicators of social and economic deprivation are in evidence: poor housing, low income and a large family.

Maturity: Maria has demonstrated considerable maturity in the home environment where she has carried a lot of responsibility from an early age.

Relationships: she has shown that when she has felt confident with other people, she could develop constructive relationships with her peers. She has performed a leadership role successfully but her initial response to other adults is one of rejection until she has established a trusting relationship.

Emotional stability: she is usually calm and stable, and her sullen and rejecting appearence tends to reflect her insecurity and lack of confidence.

Interests and hobbies: Maria has not expressed any interest beyond the many demands and responsibilities she has within the family.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Preference for employment: Maria has expressed an interest in retailing.

Parental attitude to work: her parents do not see her as an independent young adult who could be employed outside the home. They offer her little support or encouragement; rather, she is subjected to considerable pressure to maintain her role of helping within the family.

CASE-STUDY: CHRIS

This information gives a picture of an individual, drawn from a number of sources. It is presented in a way in which those sources (for example, careers, health and education agencies) may provide information. It *does not* represent the best way of presenting information about learners and *should not* be treated as a useful model. It may be subjective and include a variety of assumptions and value judgements. Its accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 19

Schools attended: local day special school. He spent the last two years at a college extension course. The specialist careers officer has arranged for Chris to join a sympathetic YTS scheme, where he could be introduced to work. His achievements throughout his career reflect his improving confidence and skills as well as his ability to get on with people.

Physical development: his co-ordination is reasonable and his physical development well within the ordinary range. He is somewhat ungainly in his movements.

Verbal communication: Chris is able to communicate adequately; in fact he is talkative in the extreme, although the limited repertoire of his conversation can be boring and indicates a limitation to his intellectual ability.

Self care: he is able to care for himself independently.

Public transport: completely independent

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: he can read and write familiar words and short pieces of information. He needs help to improve his concentration and memory which limit his learning in all areas.

Numeracy: he has a basic level of skill which has been developed through the practical application of his abilities in work situations, using computer programs and in projects.

Practical subjects: he is able to complete successfully simple repetitive tasks. This has helped him to gain confidence in his achievements, but his difficulty in learning and retaining new information and skills limits his participation in off-the-job training and on work placement.

He has sat no formal examinations. IQ: overall score 88

SOCIAL INFORMAITON

Home background: Chris has a caring and supportive family with two older brothers. His father is a long-distance lorry driver and his mother a nurse, who works on night duty so she can 'keep an eye' on Chris.

Maturity: he is reliable, helpful and comes across as a mature young man although, when you get to know him, he is clearly less mature than his years.

Relationships: he gets on well with people, especially adults, who are more sympathetic to his limitations. Everyone is Chris's mate, and he needs to be reminded to kerb his enthusiasm in some situations. His peers sometimes get bored by him but his good-natured approach helps overcome this.

Emotional stability: he is stable, but sometimes over enthusiastic.

Interests and hobbies: Chris is a member of the local rugby club.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

He enjoyed a work placement in a local firm, which required him to do simple, repetitive tasks and offered a high level of supervision. He gained in confidence from the experience.

Preference for employment: Chris is happy to go along with anything which is suggested. He has said that he might like to be a driver, but is inconsistent in his preference.

Information from work experience: his placement was successful in many respects, but it was necessary for him to restrain his 'mateyness' in the work environment and to learn appropriate behaviour in work relationships.

Parental attitude to work: Chris's parents are very pleased with his progress, however small, and encourage him to do his best. They appreciate that he has limitations to his vocational potential and are pleased that he has another opportunity to get more training.

CASE-STUDY: DAVID

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 16

Schools attended: his school career was rather disrupted by moves in his home. He attended local comprehensive schools then an off-site withdrawal unit.

Physical development: within the ordinary range. His co-ordination is good.

Verbal communication: expresses himself well.

Self care: independent.

Public transport: independent.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: his literacy skills are well developed and present no problem except for occasional spellings. He avoids anything which could be difficult as he fears failure. He is generally underachieving as a result.

Numeracy: he has a basic level of competence, but avoids new and challenging tasks.

Practical subjects: he is reasonably competent across a wide range of skills, but his avoidance of new or challenging work limits his progress.

No formal qualifications.

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: David is living in an adolescent hostel at present. He had been rejected by his parents and spent much of his childhood in children's homes and in care. He experienced two unsuccessful foster placements.

Maturity: he needs to learn to accept responsibility for himself and his actions. He also needs to be reassured constantly and given attention. His general level of maturity is below his 16 years.

Relationships: David needs to develop skills in building and maintaining relationships. He experiences difficulty in accepting authority and staff working with him describe it as extremely demanding and requiring superhuman patience. Staff spend a lot of time with him, talking about his behaviour and its consequences, in the hope that they can build an understanding and trusting relationship with him. He will work alongside others, but cannot relate properly to them. He uses his preference to work alone to foster the isolation as a sense of superiority and power, and his peers tend to fear him because he is unpredictable and can be violent.

Emotional stability: he requires continuous attention and has a number of mechanisms to elicit it, from temper rages to provocation of others. He has achieved little stability in any way.

Interests and hobbies: watching videos.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Work experience: in the work situation he found it difficult to accept authority or to work properly with his work-mates.

Preference for employment: none expressed.

He has not undertaken any work experience to date as it is felt that his behaviour is too unpredictable and complex. The staff at his hostel are keen for him to undertake any form of constructive daytime occupation.

CASE-STUDY: SALLY

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 19

Schools attended (last five years): a day school for delicate children then a day school for severe learning difficulties and finally a residential boarding school for children with moderate learning difficulties. She has made considerable progress during her rather disrupted school career, developing self-reliance, independence and a number of her practical and creative skills. She now has a clear idea of what she wants to work towards in the future.

Physical development: a petite young woman, she is slightly built. She has good co-ordination.

Verbal communication: she can express herself clearly and is easy to understand.

Self care: she is completely independent, very concerned for her appearance and wears well applied make-up and fashionable clothing.

Public transport: completely independent.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: enjoys writing; maintains a large correspondence with 'old friends', mainly former teachers and social workers. Some difficulties with spelling but most of what is written is understandable. Can read and follow written instructions.

Numeracy: manages simple addition and subtraction and can cope adequately with money.

Practical subjects: keen and able cook, art and design work; drama and music can be outstanding when compared to peers.

No formal examinations sat. IQ: 87 (four years before)

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: recently moved in with mother and four younger siblings. Previously had a residential placement in a convent for women with severe and moderate learning difficulties. Prior to that, she lived with foster parents near her own home. Her mother recently returned to this country after several years abroad, is now resettled and Sally has moved back with her, but she talks of moving abroad again. Two other siblings are in care.

Maturity: usually comes over as a mature young woman but can be very immature.

Relationships: has a fluctuating relationship with mother; sometimes says she cannot stand her and wants to move out to a flat of her own. She is very fond of all her siblings and is often left to look after them. Visits her brothers, who are in care, regularly. Has developed some strong relationships with peers, but her frequent moves have disrupted them. Can enlist support and sympathy from her peers and act as a leader in the group. Forms strong attachments to teachers/social workers, etc. She is demanding but her pleasant and appealing personality means that she is popular.

Emotional stability: can have extreme outbursts of temper, mainly shouting, swearing and throwing things, but does not usually act aggressively towards people. Most usual response is to rush out or lock herself away. Always quick to apologise afterwards. She can be very attention seeking and consequently presents a management problem.

Interests and hobbies: fashion, art and drama

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Work experience: in a laundry, and at a residential establishment – maid and kitchen duties.

Preference for employment: wants to be a fashion designer.

Information from work experience: works quite well most of the time but easily gets bored. Tended to complain that the work was hard and boring but she could do it all.

Parental attitude to work: mother wants Sally at home to look after the other children.

CASE-STUDY: SANDEEP

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 18

Schools attended in last five years: a day comprehensive school then a day special school for children with emotional and behavioural disturbance. His achievements during his school career were considerable until the age of 14, and subsequently, he has made good progress in music and art history.

Physical development: average height, but rather overweight. His hand/eye co-ordination has become rather unsteady, which he finds frustrating.

Verbal communication: he can express himself articulately and understands all that is said.

Self care: can be independent, but personal hygiene is poor at times. This is sometimes an early sign of a bout of depression.

Public transport: independent except when depressed when he becomes confused.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: reads and writes within normal range.

Numeracy: he was studying for GCE 'O' levels and was making satisfactory progress until hospitalisation at age 14 for periods of severe depression.

Practical subjects: enjoys music and art which he was studying for 'O' level GCE. Now experiences difficulty with co-ordination which affects standard of art work and CDT work.

Examinations: no formal qualifications. IQ: 113 at 11 years

Comments: most reports suggest that he is academically able, but when he feels under stress, he becomes depressed and withdrawn. A vocationally oriented course, which should not be too demanding, has been recommended.

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: lives with parents and older brother. Parents are caring and very concerned about Sandeep. They tend to be overprotective of him, and find him very difficult to understand. His parents hope he will some day be 'cured'. They feel a strong sense of guilt and sometimes indulge Sandeep.

Maturity: immature and dependent.

Relationships: he is generally obedient with adults but rarely takes the initiative in communications. He depends on his parents for most things but has little to do with his elder brother, who has tried to involve him in his own hobbies and interests until giving up in frustration. His brother now devotes much more attention to his girlfriend. He has one 'friend', who he works with and sits with during breaks, but tends to remain aloof from most of his peers.

Emotional stability: tends to be withdrawn and distant. He is lethargic and is motivated only when listening to music. He is usually calm, but on rare occasions he can become frustrated and angry. However, his outbursts are short and he usually ends in tears. He presents a management problem because he does not demand attention and is easy to ignore, yet he needs to be motivated and to receive constant prompting. He could achieve much more.

Interests and hobbies: enjoys listening to music.

Comments: he attends the local psychiatric clinic for regular check-ups. He says his medication makes him feel tired and he has frequent headaches. He says he finds it hard to concentrate.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

No work experience.

Preference for employment: he would like to work in the music industry in some capacity, but he doesn't think it is very likely.

Parental attitude: his parents do not want him to work yet and have said they will look after him at home if necessary. They really want him to complete his education and get some useful qualifications for the future, when they hope he will be able to get a good job.

CASE-STUDY: GLADSTONE

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 17

Schools attended (last five years): day school for children with moderate learning difficulties, including a college link course. He was a popular and lively character at school who made good progress and developed effective if unusual methods of communicating for himself.

Physical development: tall, well-built young man who has good co-ordination.

Verbal communication: he uses mime, gestures and his own system of drawings to communicate as he has a stammer and has difficulty expressing himself verbally. This makes him very frustrated, which in turn increases his stammer.

Self care: independent, but needs reminders over personal hygiene. His clothing is fashionable, but tends to be dirty and changed infrequently.

Public transport: independent, unless he needs to ask for a ticket or destination, when he would rather walk.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: recognises his name and a few common signs but cannot read sentences. He can write a few known words and phrases. He has received special help with literacy during his school career and has made some progress. He has developed an effective system of cartoon-like drawings to communicate, together with his mime and gestures.

Numeracy: he has reasonable mechanical arithmetic skills and copes well with money. He has shown considerable interest in, and aptitude for, computing skills.

Practical skills: he is very well co-ordinated in both gross and fine motor areas. He draws well and enjoys most crafts but dislikes cooking, which he considers to be women's work. His main talent is in playing sports.

Examinations: passed CSE art. IQ: verbal score 62, non-verbal 90 (school leavers report).

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: lives at home with mother and four younger siblings. One other sister is at the same school for children with moderate learning difficulties. His father is unemployed and periodically leaves home. His mother works early mornings, cleaning to help support the family; she has been described as 'a bit simple'. The family is a close-knit one, and the maternal grandparents live down the road and play a significant and supporting role in the family.

Maturity: Gladstone is a physically mature young man whose behaviour sometimes belies his appearance. He can behave in a reliable and sensible way, but may revert to tantrums when frustrated.

Relationships: he gets on well with most adults and his relationships are helped by his sense of humour. He is very fond of his mother and has a special attachment to his grandfather, who was a keen cricketer in his youth. He is not particularly interested in the younger siblings, most of whom he thinks are boring, but one younger brother is also good at sports and Gladstone tends to spend most of the time with him. He is popular with his peers, despite his communication difficulty, partially because of his sporting prowess and partially because he is 'a clown'.

Emotional stability: he is generally amenable and good-humoured, but can become frustrated, when he has been known to lash out at both staff and other learners. His physical size and strength can be intimidating and he knows and sometimes uses this when he feels threatened. He is quite demanding of staff attention when he needs help, but quickly loses interest and 'turns off' if he feels he cannot do what is required of him. He presents a

management problem with his fooling around, which can disrupt and involve the other learners. His level of literacy and verbal communication skills also present difficulties.

Interests and hobbies: all sports.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Work experience: as a shelf filler in a local shop. He walked out after two days.

Preference for employment: he has not expressed any preference, but he doesn't want to work in a shop again.

Information from work experience: he needed a lot of help with working out where things go. His personal hygiene was unacceptable for shop work, but the main problem came when he was caught juggling tins to entertain the other staff. The manager reprimanded him, he tried to argue back, but lost his temper and threw the remaining tins at the manager before leaving.

Parental attitude: his mother wants him to get a job and earn some money. She thinks he should work on the docks, like his father used to. She does not appear to appreciate his limitations.

CASE-STUDY: RONKE

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 19

Schools attended (last five years): day special school for children with physical and neurological impairments. Ronke was popular and successful at school, and has achieved considerable self-confidence and independence.

Physical development: young woman of small stature. Ronke is a user of a wheelchair, in which she is relatively independent. Her co-ordination is good. She uses various aids and adapted equipment to help her as she has limited strength in her arms.

Verbal communication: an articulate young woman.

Self care: needs assistance with bathing, dressing and going to the toilet. Can manage to wash unaided but tires quickly when attempting physically demanding tasks.

Transport: she is hoping to get a car which she can drive herself, so she can be independent. At present she travels in any vehicle which can accommodate a wheelchair. She went to school on local authority transport. Her parents have a specially adapted car.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: well above average written work.

Numeracy: within the average range, but she has experienced some difficulty in this area relative to her ability level and her attainment in other areas.

Practical subjects: can achieve satisfactory results in cookery, craft, design and technology sessions using her adapted tools and equipment.

Examinations: passed five GCE 'O' levels and two CSEs. She completes her work quickly and easily and tends to become bored if it is insufficiently challenging.

IQ: 118 (verbal score 123)

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: Ronke lives with her parents in a large detached house which has been specially adapted for her. She has an elder sister who is at college, studying art. The family are financially secure and both parents are professional people. Her mother, a solicitor, has not worked since Ronke was born, but is starting a small business from her home. The family is caring and supportive.

Maturity: she is slightly less mature than others of her age.

Relationships: she has a warm relationship with her immediate family. Her relationship with her sister was particularly close and she misses her now she lives away at college. She used to be included in her sister's group of friends and was a part of the normal teenage scene so, as a result, her relationships with other young people are good and she has good interpersonal skills. She has a small group of close friends at school and they visit each other out of school. She gets on well with most staff, and has an open and easy relationship with people she knows.

Emotional stability: she has developed good self-control and the temper tantrums of her childhood are a thing of the past. She is more able than most of the people she is with, and is able to manipulate situations and people to cause disruption but often manages to appear uninvolved in the disruption although she was the initiator. She does not demand attention.

Interests and hobbies: reading, films and the theatre.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Work experience: doing basic clerical and receptionist duties, including answering the telephone.

Preference for employment: journalism.

Information from work experience: a successful placement. She carried out all the duties satisfactorily and received an excellent report from her employer, but she found it rather boring and lacking in challenge.

Parental attitude to work: the aspirations of the whole family are high and the parents expect her to gain worthwhile employment. They encourage her to develop her interests.

CASE-STUDY: MICHAEL

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 16

Schools attended: comprehensive until 12 years when he moved to a boarding school for children with emotional and behavioural disturbance. His major achievements at school were a considerable improvement in his self control and his ability to behave in an acceptable manner. He completed a work placement which helped to improve his self-esteem.

Physical development: a well-developed and well-co-ordinated young man.

Verbal communication: his speech is clear and his understanding good.

Self care: he is reasonably good at keeping himself clean and is an ardent user of after shave. He tends not to care or look after his possessions, including clothes.

Public transport: completely independent.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: he can read and write short phrases and simple sentences using familiar vocabulary, but this is the area with which he has major problems. His reading age is several years below his chronological age. He uses a series of well practised strategies, such as questioning to try to mask his inadequate skills since he is very keen not to appear to be inadequate.

Numeracy: he can carry out simple mechanical arithmetic but, beyond this, has problems. He uses similar strategies to hide this; for example, he can easily find out the time, although he has difficulties reading a clock face or relating the figures on a digital display. He copes with money without the real numeracy skill to back it up.

Practical skills: he is quite good at most practical activities, but careless. He needs to learn to attend to detail and develop a sense of perfectionism. His observation skills are poor and he finds it difficult to judge his own work. He is keen to get things finished and not be left behind, rather than think about the end product.

Examinations: his school did not wish to subject the learners to the pressure of public examinations, so the emphasis was on social skills and work experience.

IQ: verbal score 90, non-verbal score 102.

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: his family is in turmoil with frequent aggression and violence and his parents see him as fermenting the problems within the family. He does not get on with his younger brother, who usurped his position as the youngest and has been aggressive towards him. His family lack social skills themselves, and he has not learned the basic 'rules' of behaviour from them. The family provide him with no support or encouragement and feel he should work his problems out for himself.

Maturity: he is about two years behind his peers in general, but is very much less mature emotionally.

Relationships: he does not get on with his family. Communications tend to be focused around rows and usually end in violence. He has reasonable relationships with staff, to whom he can refer and relate quite well, but his relationships with his peers are poor with frequent arguments and squabbles. He cannot make friends because he lacks the skills to do so.

Emotional stability: he has now developed some degree of self-control and has learned acceptable 'classroom behaviour', but he has poor self-esteem and lacks confidence. He presents a management problem as he tends to overact grossly and make a great scene. He is instrumental in stirring up trouble and has bullied others. He needs constant encouragement and reinforcement from the staff, but he finds it very hard to co-operate with others, although he needs to refer to the staff for reassurance throughout his work

and finds it hard to work alone. Anything new must be presented to him very slowly and carefully as he lacks the confidence to experiment.

Interests and hobbies: watching TV and videos.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

He had work experience in a local carpentry firm, he managed to stick it out and his self-esteem seemed to develop as a result.

Preference for employment: carpentry (his father was a carpenter).

Information from work experience: much of his work was satisfactory but his main problems were related to his carelessness. His employers also commented on his lack of initiative, his need for reassurance and the general demanding nature of his personality.

Parental attitudes: his parents want him to get a job and to earn some money. They do not see themselves as having a role in helping him gain employment. They cannot really see the point in YTS as it is not the proper job which they want him to get.

CASE-STUDY: LISCA

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 18

Schools attended: day special school for children with physical and neurological impairment, which involved some integration in the local comprehensive school. She attended a college link course during her final year. She made satisfactory progress at school although her attendance was rather erratic, and has become a little more confident.

Physical development: has good co-ordination and she enjoys and is good at swimming. Her stature is slightly shortened due to her curved spine.

Physical needs: she requires support while sitting to support her severely curved spine, to prevent further curvature. She has asthma which sometimes restricts her mobility, concentration and attendance. She can manage to read large print, but has a visual impairment and wears thick glasses.

Verbal communication: she can communicate well, but has a very high-pitched voice.

Self care: independent. Clean and well dressed.

Public transport: used local authority transport for school and college. She can use public transport if accompanied.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: she can read, but is rather slow as she must use magnifiers. She finds simple material and short sentences easier. Her reading age when last tested was 11.9 years. She can write reasonably although features of her writing are poor spelling, short sentences and simple structures. She can concentrate well for short periods but the limits of this attention span affect all of her educational progress.

Numeracy: this is her preferred activity. She has all basic arithmetic skills and copes well with money and time.

Practical skills: her co-ordination is good so she is quite reasonable at most practical activities, but she tends to rush her work. She has difficulties if she is required to remember a complex series of instructions.

Examinations: none taken. IQ: full scale 96.

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: she lives at home with her elderly mother who herself has poor vision due to cataracts. She has no sibling. Her mother is dependent on her to help her around the house and to provide her with company. She is very protective of her and is anxious about anything which she considers puts Lisca at risk.

Maturity: Lisca is somewhat immature. She is over-dependent on adults.

Relationships: she is very fond of, and attached to, her mother. She gets on quite well with most adults but she is very quiet, dreamy and undemanding, and finds it difficult to build relationships with her peers, preferring to work alone. She suffered some abusive comments from local children and prefers to keep herself to herself. She is rather withdrawn.

Emotional stability: she has a calm and even temperament, with a tendency to withdraw and dream. She presents difficulties in management due to her limited attention span and undemanding nature and she appears to be underachieving in most areas. She needs help to boost her confidence and to learn to take the initiative.

Interests and hobbies: watching TV and listening to the radio at home. She attends a special swimming club each week, travelling by minibus.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

She missed two planned work experiences due to asthma. It was felt that perhaps she did not wish to attend and colluded with her mother over her absences.

Preference for employment: she is very unsure about this and feels she would like to work with animals or children.

Parental attitude: her mother does not want her to go to work. She does not object to proposed college and YTS schemes which she refers to as 'school'.

CASE-STUDY: IVAN

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 23

Schools attended: he spent two terms at special boarding school at the age of eight, then moved to a partial hearing unit attached to the local comprehensive school. He made considerable progress at school and was successful in public examinations. He attended the local FE college for one term before 'dropping out'.

Physical development: normal; his co-ordination is good.

Verbal communication: he has learned to sign, using the British sign system, and has been taught to lip-read, but finds this difficult and exhausting. He has a profound hearing loss with some residual hearing. His speech is very difficult to understand, which he finds frustrating.

Self care: completely independent.

Transport: owns his own 'banger'.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: good; writes fluently, but sometimes uses some unusual sentence structures when writing.

Numeracy: good; passed CSE grade 1.

Practical subjects: can achieve excellent results in craft design and technology. He pays close attention to detail and finishes work to a high standard. However, he describes himself as not much good at art.

Examinations: four CSEs, two GCE 'O' levels. IQ: 118 at 16 years

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: Ivan lived in a children's home from the age of eight but he left the home at 18 and moved into a flat with two others, although he maintains some contact with the children's home and receives some support from them. He maintained contact with his mother for a few years, but this gradually disappeared. He was always quite independent at the children's home.

Maturity: he has really grown up since he started to live in his own home and is quite sensible in his approach to most things.

Relationships: he was a rebellious teenager and tended to question adults all the time, but had a strong relationship with a husband and wife who were houseparents in the children's home. He was part of a close-knit group who were all partially hearing. Since leaving school, he has developed more relationships with hearing people. He is outgoing and lively and makes friends quite easily despite his hearing impairment. He has a steady girl friend (from school – she also has partial hearing) and they are planning to find a flat together.

Emotional stability: he has good self-control and is reasonably stable. He experiences occasional frustration when he has difficulties communicating.

Interests and hobbies: watching sports, TV, going to nightclubs, model-making.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Previous employment: he has worked for a number of local building firms and has done various odd jobs for the last few years. The money was quite good and the work varied at first, but he has become rather disillusioned and feels he is wasting his abilities.

Preference for employment: he would like to become a skilled craftsman, possibly a cabinet maker/carpenter, and start up his own business.

CASE-STUDY: DANA

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 18

Schools attended: day special school for children with moderate learning difficulties and she attended a college link on a general education course. Her main achievements at school have related to her interest in cars and mechanical things.

Physical development: she has reasonable co-ordination, but is small for her age and physically immature.

Verbal communication: her speech is clear but contains some immature vocabulary. She can understand on most occasions, but sometimes appears to be confused by multiple or complex messages.

Self care: she has a major hygiene problem, shared with most of her family. Her clothing is ill-fitting, dirty and usually in need of repair.

Public transport: she is independent on familiar routes.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: she can read simple statements, but her approach is hesitant and mechanical and her comprehension is particularly poor. She has tried hard when writing, but it is cramped, badly formed and frequently unintelligible.

Numeracy: she asks for pages of adding up sums, which she can do well. However, she has difficulties with everything beyond simple computation.

Practical skills: she is very interested in cars and things mechanical. She will put considerable effort and attention into metal work and relevant parts of craft design and technology. In other areas, though, she tends to be lazy most of the time and needs prompting to speed up, and encouragement to take a pride in her work.

Examinations: none sat. IQ: 85

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: she is a member of a large family; mother, father (currently unemployed) and seven siblings. She is the fourth child and the youngest has Downs syndrome.

The family is poor, chaotic, but loving and caring.

Maturity: she is immature, physically and emotionally.

Relationships: she is very close to her mother and several of her siblings, but has some difficulties in sharing both attention and materials with the others. She cares for, takes out and enjoys looking after the youngest child. She tends to have been happiest with other younger children, although she has made some relationships with her peers. Her brother works at a garage and she likes to spend her time there when possible.

Emotional stability: she is generally fairly stable and slow to arouse, but she has been known to bully youngsters when unhappy.

Interests and hobbies: cars.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Work experience in a garage where she carries out general duties.

Preference for employment: anything with cars.

Information from work experience: she was keen and interested but took a long time to do what was requested. She needed to be shown the same things many times and to be reminded to complete things.

Parental attitude: they are happy for her to do what she wants, but they do not really understand the options that are open to her.

CASE-STUDY: RICHARD

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Age: 17

Schools attended: special day school for children who have visual impairment. He has revealed an aptitude for, and interest in, cooking, which he has developed well during his school career.

Physical development: within the normal range. His co-ordination is reasonable.

Verbal communication: he can communicate adequately, but is usually rather quiet.

Self care: he needs to be reminded about personal hygiene, but can be independent. He does not look after his clothes; this is done by his father.

Public transport: he is anxious when travelling by public transport but can travel with others.

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Literacy: he can read and write short phrases and known words, but he needs help to develop his literacy skills. His last reading age was nine years. He uses various forms of magnifiers.

Numeracy: he can carry out basic arithmetical operations and manages money, but has difficulty with time.

Practical activities: his greatest strength is in cooking, which he enjoys, is successful at and well-motivated in. In other cases he needs frequent reminders and reassurance to complete tasks and is rather slow.

IQ: full scale 89

SOCIAL INFORMATION

Home background: he lives at home with his father and elder brother. His father is rather impatient with Richard, and tends to be outspoken with both of his sons. Richard is frightened of his father.

Maturity: very immature; he resorts to sulking when things go wrong.

Relationships: he has something of a love hate relationship with his father. Although he is often frightened by his father, he has some admiration and respect for him. His relationship with other adults is quite acceptable but he tends to be either shy and quiet or rowdy. With his peer group he tends to be something of a loner although he has formed relationships with one or two others. He doesn't really like large groups in which he feels insecure, but occasionally gets carried away and joins in with rowdy behaviour, and he is sometimes used by others who enjoy arousing him, then watching him get into trouble.

Emotional stability: he has improved his self-control but this can be variable and he is often quiet or sulky when reprimanded, but when he does get wound up, he doesn't know when to stop. He needs reassurance over his work. He needs special magnifying aids and individually prepared materials. He also needs to be prompted and to receive reassurance while he is working and has to have encouragement and support to work with others.

Interests and hobbies: cooking, pop music.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

He had a period of work experience in a canteen.

Preference for employment: chef.

Information from work experience: he managed to carry out most tasks although he was slow and needed reminding. They would be prepared to have him back. He will need to improve his cleanliness and time keeping, and his response to correction was not satisfactory. It took him rather a long while to learn where everything was kept.

Parental attitude: his father wants him to be employed and is rather unsympathetic to his special needs. He expects that both sons will work in, then eventually take over, his bakery business and he can't see any point in further education or training as he believes he can pass on his skills to Richard.

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